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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
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| 10/556,358 | 11/10/2005 | Masahiro Makino | 050741 | 6746 |
| 23850 7590 07/27/2007 KRATZ, QUINTOS & HANSON, LLP 1420 K Street, N.W. Suite 400 WASHINGTON, DC 20005 | | | EXAMINER CHAMBERS, TRAVIS SLOAN | |
| | | | ART UNIT 2833 | PAPER NUMBER |
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/556,358

Applicant(s)

MAKINO, MASAHIRO

Examiner

Travis Chambers

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address.--

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 July 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7, 10-12, 14, 16, 18 and 20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 3, 8, 9, 13, 15, 17 and 19 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7, 10-12, 14, 16, 18 and 20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 10 November 2005 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

-- Claim 1, lines 11-12 " two longitudinal busbars crossing the longitudinal busbars at right angles." For purposes of examination it is unclear if applicant is referring to the same longitudinal busbars or to new second longitudinal busbars. An examination based on the merits, as best understood, is addressed below.

-- Appropriate correction of the above is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1,2,4-7,10-12,14,16,18,20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakanishi (6910923) in view of Ozaki et al. (5160274).

In reference to claim 1, Nakanishi teaches a block body (11b;figure 1) having a plurality of connector-fitting chambers (19;figure 2) arranged in a line on one side of the block body (11b; figure 1) and a busbar-receiving part (11; figure 1) communicating with the connector-fitting chambers (19) on an opposite side of the block body (11b; figure 1); a plurality of longitudinal busbars (20, 30 and 32; figure 2), each of which includes at least one branch terminal (21, 31,33; figure 2) projecting in the connector-fitting chamber (19) and at least one pair of clip terminals (end portion of 21, 31a, 33a; figure 1) situated on the side of the busbar-receiving part (11; figure 1); and a plurality of lateral busbars (1b extending from top to bottom; figure 1), each of which includes at least one branch terminal (3 and 4 extending from 2; figure 1) projecting in the connector-fitting chamber (19; figure 2) and a connecting part (near lead line 14b; figure 2) to be connected to the pair of the clip terminals (end portion 21, 31a, 33a) on the side of the busbar-receiving part (11), the lateral busbar (1b extending from top to bottom) being connected to at least two longitudinal busbars (20,30 and 32) crossing the longitudinal busbars (20, 30 and 32) at right angles, wherein the branch terminals (21, 31a, 33a) of the longitudinal busbar (20, 30 and 32) and the branch terminals (3 and 4 extending from 2) of the lateral busbars (1b extending from top to bottom) are arranged in a line in the connector-fitting chambers (19).

However Nakanishi does not teach connector-fitting chambers receiving connectors of at least one outside wiring harness.

Ozaki teaches connector-fitting chambers (3a ; figure 14) receiving connectors (9 ; figure 14) of at least one outside wiring harness (1 ; figure 14)

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to use the teaching of Ozaki to improve the invention of Nakanishi.

One skilled in the art would have been motivated to use the teachings of Ozaki because, as taught by Ozaki (Col. 1 line(s) 15-20,43-49), it provides faster assembly by allowing wires to be inserted, connected and removed as a unit.

In reference to claim 2, Nakanishi teaches a plurality of slit grooves (13 and 19a; figure 1) which receives the longitudinal busbar (20, 30 and 32); and a plurality of lateral slits (16a; figure 1), each of which engages with the connecting part (near lead line 14b; figure 2) of the lateral busbar (1b extending from top to bottom), the lateral slit (16a) crossing the slit groove (13 and 19a; figure 1) at right angles.

In reference to claim 4 and 12, Nakanishi teaches the branch terminal (21, 31a and 33a) of the longitudinal busbar (20, 30 and 32) is offset in a direction crossing at right angles from a connection part (near lead line 14b; figure 2) from which the pair of the clip terminals (end portion of 21; figure 1) protrudes, while the branch terminal (3 and 4; figure 1) of the lateral busbar (1b extending from top to bottom; figure 1) is on the same plane as that of the connection part (near lead line 14b; figure 2) of the lateral busbar (1b; figure 1).

In reference to claim 5 and 14, Nakanishi teaches a plurality of ribs are projectingly formed on a partition wall (16c; figure 1) of the connector-fitting chamber (19; figure 2), the rib (16b; figure 2) insulating the branch terminals (2 pertaining to 20

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and near lead line 4 pertaining to 1b; figure 1) of each the longitudinal (20; figure 1) or lateral (1b extending from top to bottom; figure 1) busbar from each other.

In reference to claim 6 and 16, Nakanishi teaches each end of the pair of the clip terminals (end portion of 21, 31a, 33a) protrudes outward (in an outward direction into 17 ; figure 1) from the busbar-receiving part (11; figure 1).

In reference to claim 7 and 18, Nakanishi teaches a cover (10b; figure 1) is fitted to the block body (11b; figure 1) and each said longitudinal (20, 30, 32) or lateral busbar (1b; figure 1) abuts against the cover (10b; figure 1), thereby preventing each busbar (pertaining to 20,30,32 or 1b) from slipping out.

In reference to claims 10 and 20, Nakanishi teaches the longitudinal (20,30, 32;) or lateral (1b extending from top to bottom; figure 1) busbar is formed.

However, Nakanishi does not teach the recitation "by cutting a laterally linked terminal into a required shape" as a method of forming.

To the extent that the reference does not discuss the method of forming is not germane to receiving patentability. Further the element is seen to be formed the same way.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to change the method of forming.

One skilled in the art would have been motivated to change the method of forming in order to produce each element faster and for less cost.

In reference to claim 11, Nakanishi shows substantially the invention as claimed. However Nakanishi does not teach an unnecessary pair of the clip terminal or branch

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terminal is cut off from the connecting part of the longitudinal or lateral busbar and/or the connecting part is cut into a required length or cut at a required position.

To the extent that the reference does not discuss an unnecessary pair of the clip terminal or branch terminal is cut off from the connecting part of the longitudinal or lateral busbar and/or the connecting part is cut into a required length or cut at a required position, this is seen to be an obvious modification of the size of the structure of the reference.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to change the size of the structure of Nakanishi.

One skilled in the art would have been motivated to in order make it easier to distinguish where to install each element and to prevent incorrect insertion of the element.

Reasons for Allowance

- ☐ The allowed claims are 3,8,9,13,15,17,19.
- ☐ The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The prior art does not show the unique structure of a concave groove is formed in a partition wall of the connector fitting chamber, the cover includes a plurality of ribs against each of which an end of each pair of the clip terminals abuts and an inclined shaped guide surface on the inlet of the groove. This structure, in combination with all the other elements of the

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claim is not seen to be anticipated by the prior art and the examiner knows of no permissible motivation to combine the prior art such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made.

If the application becomes allowable, any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowable Subject Matter".

Response to Arguments

-- In response to applicant's remarks (page 1 , line 8-14) in Papers Dated (07/12/2007) concerning " alleged 'branch terminals', that is (21) and (near lead line 4) of Nakanishi, can not properly be considered to be branch terminals for connecting to a connector....", examiner disagrees. The test for obviousness is not whether the features of one reference may be bodily incorporated into the other to produce the claimed subject matter but simply what the combination of references makes obvious to one of ordinary skill in the pertinent art. In re Bozek, 163 USPQ 545 (CCPA 1969). In particular to the claimed branch terminals of the longitudinal busbar, the assigned branch terminals (21; figure 1) do extend or "branch" from element 22 figure 1 of the longitudinal busbar (20; figure 1). The claimed branch terminal of the lateral bus bar, the assigned branch

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terminal (4; figure 1), as well as element 3; figure 1 , of lateral busbar (1b; figure 1) extend or "branch" from element 2; figure 1.

Conclusion

The prior listed on PTO form 892 that is made of record is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure because it shows the state of the art with respect to applicant's claimed invention.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Travis Chambers whose telephone number is 571-272-6813. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 8am - 4:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paula Bradley can be reached on 571-272-2001. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Travis Chambers
TC
7/20/2007

/James Harvey/
James Harvey
Primary Examiner